

Department of Transportation

State Project No. 98-103 Federal Aid Project Number 0139(033) Improvements on CT Route 139 between Marbar Street and Valley Road Towns of Branford and North Branford

Public Informational Meeting Held at North Branford Town Hall 909 Foxon Road, North Branford Tuesday, February 15, 2011

Minutes

Presentation:

- There were approximately 30 attendees, including the Members of the Town Council, the Town Manager and the Town Engineer.
- A colored plan of the proposed improvements and an accident diagram were displayed. The Department presented the Preliminary Design proposal as well as the Rights of Way process to the attendees.
- The project involves intersection improvements on Route 139 between Marbar Street and Valley Road to improve sightlines and address the number and type of accidents occurring on this section of roadway. The following improvements are proposed:
 - ⇒ Widen Route 139 to provide an exclusive left-turn lane at School Ground Road and southbound bypass capability at Valley Road.
 - ⇒ Install a traffic signal at the Route 139/School Ground Road intersection.
 - ⇒ Re-grade the embankment slope on the inside of the existing horizontal curve on Route 139.
 - ⇒ Widen School Ground Road to provide exclusive left-turn and right-turn lanes at the intersection.
 - ⇒ Reconstruct Valley Road to form a T-type intersection.
- It is anticipated that minor property acquisitions, slope easements, and drainage right of way will be required.
- Estimated cost of the project is \$3.3 million funded by 90% Federal and 10% State funds.
- Construction is anticipated to begin in spring 2013 based on the availability of federal/state funding.

Public Comments and Questions:

- The Owners of Van Wilgen's Garden Center located on Valley Road, east of the project limits, expressed their concerns about the proposed project by handing out a written statement and speaking at the meeting. Their main concern was the accessibility of Valley Road during construction, especially during the months of April through July. They asserted that 70% of their business' income is made during these months and that they would be adversely affected if access to Valley Road is not provided. They were also concerned about the removal of the existing island at the Route 139/Valley Road intersection where the garden center's sign is installed. They stated that the sign is a critical advertisement for their business and that the business would suffer without it. The

Department stated that Valley Road would remain open during construction with 2-lanes of traffic available by the end of each workday and 1 lane of traffic with flaggers at each end during construction. The owners suggested maintaining a smaller island to delineate the proposed lanes on Valley Road so that the garden center's sign could remain. The Department stated that they would investigate the feasibility of installing an island at the intersection, however, the sign would not be allowed on State property. Additionally, sightlines will have to be taken into account if signs are placed at the intersection.

- Why is there no change in the horizontal curvature in the vicinity of Valley Road? The Department responded that minor softening of the curve is proposed. The Department also stated that improving sightlines and keeping the curve relatively the same would provide a form of traffic calming at this location.
- Is there funding available for this project? The Department stated that currently, there is funding available for this project.
- Can the signal at School Ground Road include a "No Turn on Red" sign to allow traffic to exit Valley Road? The Department stated that the project is still in preliminary design and the signal design requirements have yet to be determined, but this suggestion will be forwarded to our traffic engineering unit.
- Why is a left turn lane in the vicinity of Valley Road not being provided? The Department explained that based on the traffic volumes an exclusive left turn lane is not warranted at this location and that a 9' bypass shoulder was sufficient.
- Can a traffic signal be installed at the northern project limit to control the flow of traffic on southbound Route 139 and allow traffic on Valley Road to turn left? The Department stated that because there is no intersection at that location the Department is unable to install a signal. Signing will be installed accordingly to warn drivers of the signal ahead and sightlines will be increased allowing traffic to see the signal and any stopped traffic.

Adjournment: In general, the project was well received by those in attendance. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m.